

Message Text

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P 032359Z AUG 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMCONSUL NAHA PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, EIND, JA, US

SUBJECT: TRADE FACILITATION COMMITTEE: POTENTIAL CASE
INVESTIGATION - PIKNIK PRODUCTS CO.

1. SUMMARY: USDOC INVESTIGATING POTENTIAL TFC CASE ON BEHALF OF PIKNIK PRODUCTS CO. OF MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA, RESULTING FROM JAPANESE FOOD INSPECTION PROCEDURES.
2. PIKNIK PRODUCTS CO., AN ESTABLISHED (1923) MANUFACTURER OF SALAD DRESSINGS AND CONDIMENTS, SHIPPED 200 CASES OF 4/1 GALLON GLASS CONTAINERS OF SALAD DRESSING VIA ITS EXPORT AGENT FAIRCO, INC. OF NEW ORLEANS, LA., TO NAHA, OKINAWA PREFECTURE. CONSIGNEE WAS JICCHKU SHOJI AND THE AGENT WAS JENSEN SHOKAI CO., INC. THE SHIPMENT HAS BEEN REFUSED BY THE JAPANESE ON THE BASIS THAT WHEN THE PRODUCT WAS TESTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND WELFARE (MHW) REQUIREMENTS, IT UNCLASSIFIED

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WAS DETERMINED TO CONTAIN THE PROHIBITED SUBSTANCE SORBIC ACID, A PRESERVATIVE.

3. HERMAN LOEB, JR. PRESIDENT OF PIKNIK PRODUCTS, STATED THAT PIKNIK DOES NOT AND NEVER HAS USED SORBIC ACID IN ITS SALAD DRESSING. FIRST, IT IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE U.S. FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION'S (USFDA) STANDARD OF

IDENTITY FOR SALAD DRESSING; SECOND, OTHER INGREDIENTS IN DRESSING SERVE THE PURPOSE OF PRESERVATION; AND THIRD, THE SUPPLIERS OF THE INGREDIENTS USED IN THE PRODUCT ADVISE THAT SORBIC ACID IS NOT INCLUDED IN ANY OF THE INGREDIENTS.

4. IN ORDER TO VERIFY RESULTS OF JAPANESE TESTS PIKNIK HAS REQUESTED SAMPLES OF THE SHIPMENT TO SUBMIT TO A U.S. TESTING FIRM. IN ORDER TO ASSIST PIKNIK, USDOC REQUIRES FOLLOWING INFORMATION: 1) IDENTITY OF JAPANESE FIRMS WHICH TESTED PIKNIK SHIPMENT, AND THEIR OFFICIAL STATUS; 2) JAPANESE FOOD STANDARDS FOR SORBIC ACID, IF ANY, AND ANY SPECIFIED TESTS; 3) DETAILS OF TEST PROCEDURES USED BY JAPANESE TESTING FIRM(S); AND 4) BASIS OF IDENTIFICATION OF SORBIC ACID ALLEGEDLY IDENTIFIED, AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO JAPANESE ACCEPTABLE LEVEL.

5. DUE TO LIMITATIONS ON PRODUCT SHELF LIFE IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THESE GOODS BE MOVED THROUGH PROPER TRADE CHANNELS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. WOULD APPRECIATE NAHA'S PRIORITY RESPONSE. VANCE

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